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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 ADDIS ABABA 002338

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SUBJECT: SOMALI TFG LEADERSHIP SIGNS AGREEMENT IN ADDIS
ABABA

Classified By: Ambassador Donald Yamamoto. Reason: 1.4(B).

11. (C/NF) Summary. Transitional Federal Government (TFG) President Abdullahi Yusuf, Prime Minister Hassan Hussein Nur "Adde", and Speaker Sheikh Aden Mohammed Nur Madobe signed an agreement on August 26 in Addis Ababa that commits the leaders to working together for the remainder of the transitional period. During the signing ceremony, Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum said that the agreement establishes a roadmap for the TFG to follow and he expected the international community to provide its full support. The Prime Minister said that the TFG leaders had learned their lesson and were committed to working together. The Speaker implored the international community to be patient with the TFG because it faces many challenges. In a follow-on meeting between the Ambassador and all three leaders, the Ambassador urged the parties to speak with one voice and provide each other mutual support. In a separate private meeting between the Ambassador and the Prime Minister, Nur Adde told the Ambassador that he signed the agreement because he did not want to be seen as opposed to reconciliation and because the Ethiopians would not let the Somali leaders leave until they signed. The agreement calls for the expansion of the cabinet from 15 to 23 members, the establishment of a new administration in Benadir 15 days from the agreement's approval, and the withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from Mogadishu immediately after the new Benadir Administration is created. End Summary.

Agreement Signed and Witnessed

12. (U) Under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU), on August 26, President Yusuf, Prime Minister Nur Adde, and Speaker Madobe signed the agreement in front of representatives of the diplomatic community and a strong contingent of local and international press at the Hilton Hotel in Addis Ababa. The three leaders sat together on the dais with President Yusuf in the center, the Prime Minister to his right, and the Speaker on Yusuf's left. During the ceremony the three leaders made a clear effort to portray a strong sense of unity between them, smiling and conversing with each other throughout the session. The agreement was witnessed by Ethiopian Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin, Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission Erastus J. Mwencha, and the Executive Secretary of IGAD Mahboub M. Maalim. Throughout the ceremony, Ethiopian MFA Acting Chief of the Minister's Cabinet Abdetta Dribssa, the true architect of the agreement, stood on the side of the room quietly directing the proceedings. Following the signing, the IGAD and AU representatives gave brief remarks and then Foreign Minister

Seyoum, Prime Minister Nur Adde, Speaker Madobe, and President Yusuf each made a speech.

FM Seyoum: "We Now Have a Roadmap"

13. (U) Seyoum said that the signing of the agreement created a roadmap for the TFG for the remainder of the transitional period. He emphasized that the roadmap was vital for peace and stability in Somalia. He stated that the TFG had not performed to the expectations of its partners, and he admonished the leaders for failing to work together. He said that now the TFG leaders understood they had no choice but to work together and he said that their cooperation "makes or breaks" the transitional process, including the implementation of the Djibouti Agreement. Seyoum said it was understandable that the international community might view this agreement with skepticism, but he said he "was personally convinced in the new solidarity of the TFG leadership," and he said that the TFG was worthy of increased support from the international community. He said that the TFG did not receive all of the support that it "expected and deserved." He closed by saying that the TFG was the bulwark against chaos in Somalia, and that without international support "sustainable peace in Somalia was hardly possible."

PM Nur Adde: "We Have Learned Our Lesson"

14. (U) The Prime Minister said that he was "happy" that the

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TFG leaders had solved their differences and were now committed to working together. He said he was "ashamed" that that they could not resolve their differences internally, and that they had learned their lesson. From now on they would solve their problems professionally and "in house." He noted that the task in the remaining year of the transitional period was huge. He said that if his government did not establish regional administrations in the next four months as directed by the TFG Charter, then the parliament should consider whether a vote of no confidence was in order. Finally, he appealed to the international community and the United Nations Security Council to uphold its responsibilities under the Djibouti Agreement.

Speaker Madobe: "Be Tolerant of the TFG"

15. (U) Madobe, speaking through an interpreter, said he was glad that they had solved their differences with the support of the Ethiopian government, and that he was sorry they needed outside help. He asked the international community to be tolerant of the TFG, and "not be fatigued." He said many problems were prohibiting the establishment of a federal system of government in Somalia, but the most significant problem was the "occupation and subjugation" of Somali people who were not in "their areas" and who had taken land that was not theirs. He said these extremists were not true Muslims, but they were using Islam to subjugate peoples. He stated that if the international community did not assist the TFG, these extremists would spread and be a problem for the entire region. He said Ethiopia wants to withdraw from Somalia and that the international community should fulfill its promises to allow that to happen. He ended by saying that, now that "we are reconciled," we need the support of the international community.

President Yusuf: "We Are Grateful..."

16. (U) President Yusuf, making the shortest statement of the three TFG leaders, expressed his "sincere appreciation for the hospitality and reception of the Ethiopian government." He outlined the agreement in the most general

terms, and then condemned those who violated the cease-fire by capturing Kismayo. He also expressed his "gratitude" to the international community for its support to the TFG and he urged the UN Security Council to deliver on its commitment to deploy an international stabilization force to Somalia.

The Ambassador, President, PM, and Speaker Meet Together

17. (C/NF) In a separate meeting immediately following the ceremony, the Ambassador told the President, Prime Minister, and Speaker that it was vital that they speak with one voice and provide each other mutual support. He also encouraged them to embrace reconciliation in order to make the TFG a success and bring stability to Somalia. President Yusuf responded that "we know what we need to do," and that "we will overcome these difficulties." The Prime Minister said that "we have committed ourselves to unity and from now on we will work as one team." Yusuf said that on August 27 "we will return to Baidoa to face the parliament, and deal with the no confidence motion against Nur Adde." Yusuf predicted that with the unity of the three leaders, "we should be able to convince them that the motion is no longer necessary." The President also promised to reconcile with those who were willing, but he said that he would defend the government against those who were not for peace. He underscored, while taking the Ambassador's hand, that "without unity we cannot go far." Responding to the leaders call for increased support from the international community, the Ambassador urged them to communicate their needs to the U.S. Special Envoy for Somalia Yates and Ambassador Ranneberger in Nairobi.

Prime Minister: "I Signed Because I Wanted to Go Home"

18. (C/NF) The Prime Minister told the Ambassador in a subsequent private meeting that he signed the agreement because he did not want to be seen to be opposed to reconciliation, and because he wanted to go home. He noted that the Ethiopian government would not let the TFG leaders

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leave until they signed. Nur Adde said he was warned by his supporters not to sign the agreement because the Prime Minister would lose at least 40 seats of support against the no confidence motion brought by Yusuf currently before the parliament. (Note: Ethiopian officials confirmed privately that the leaders were not allowed to leave until they signed the agreement. A TFG interlocutor told the Ambassador that the Prime Minister thought he was an Ethiopian prisoner when he flew to Addis Ababa on August 15.)

19. (C/NF) Nur Adde explained that the President was behind the agitation against him in the parliament and was the originator of the no confidence motion. After going into great detail listing the litany of ways the President was trying to undermine him, he said that he and the President disagreed on how to deal with the motion on August 27 when they would fly to Baidoa and address the parliament. The President wanted the "supporters of the motion" to withdraw it, while the Prime Minister wanted the motion to be voted on, up or down. Nur Adde said that if the motion was acted on and defeated, the motion could not be brought against him in parliament for another six months. If the motion was withdrawn, the motion could be brought back to the floor the next day. He said that if the motion was approved he would leave the government, but he did not want to spend every day for the next year fighting a rear-guard action, defending himself against Yusuf's proxies. He said he would rather retire than face that every day.

110. (C/NF) The Prime Minister said, "we will see how long this agreement will work." He opined that Yusuf did not care whether the TFG succeeded or not. He said that he had recently told Yusuf that Yusuf was losing popular support because he was continuing to stand behind the unpopular

Mohammed Dheere. Yusuf responded that he did not care because he had a place to go if it (the TFG) did not work. Nur Adde stressed that he cared and wanted the TFG to succeed and he wanted to see the Djibouti Agreement implemented to "keep hope alive." At the same time, he promised that he would commit to the agreement he had just signed to "enlarge the atmosphere of cooperation" to avoid friction to keep the peace process on track. He expected Yusuf to hold to the agreement for a time, but he could not predict for how long.

¶11. (C/NF) Nur Adde went on to note that the fundamental problem in Somalia was that people like Yusuf and the other warlords were afraid of peace. He said these people had enjoyed a life of privilege during the last 18 years of chaos where they were not subject to any government or law. When law and order is restored to Somalia, these people will be made to be equals with everyone else, subject to the rule of law, Nur Adde said.

Main Points of the Agreement

¶12. (U) The three-page agreement, a copy of which was provided to the Ambassador and sent to AF and Embassy Nairobi, notes the commitment of the three leaders to "respect the Transitional Federal Charter and work together in a new spirit of cooperation and trust." It also lays out an ambitious roadmap for the TFG throughout the remaining transitional period. Selected highlights of the agreement include:

--A pledge by the parties to work together acknowledging that the TFG Charter is the supreme law of the country and agreeing that there will be no interference in the day to day activities of each other's work as provided for in the Charter;

--Expansion of the cabinet from 15 to 23 members to include the 15 ministers of the cabinet prior to the crisis, the three ministers nominated by the Prime Minister during the crisis, and five additional ministers to maintain the 4.5 formula of the Charter;

--A requirement that a new Benadir Administration be established 15 days from the agreement's signing;

--A requirement that the Prime Minister submit a draft budget to Parliament within 15 days of the agreement's approval;

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--A requirement for the reorganization of the military, police, and security forces to establish a clear command and control structure;

--The redeployment and withdrawal of Ethiopian troops from Mogadishu to be effected immediately upon the establishment of the Benadir Administration;

--A commitment to the Djibouti Agreement; and

--A reaffirmation of the TFG Charter requirement for the establishment of all regional and state administrations by November 2008.

Comment

¶13. (C/NF) The agreement gives the leadership of the TFG an opportunity to make the Somali government work going forward, if they decide to seize it. However, the fact that the leaders had to be forced into accepting an Ethiopian authored agreement, Yusuf's apparent bribing of the parliament to bring up the motion of no confidence against the Prime Minister during the negotiations in Addis Ababa, and the fact that Yusuf wants to preserve the option of bringing the

motion against Nur Adde in the days and weeks ahead, strongly suggest that while the current crisis may be over, the rift between President and Prime Minister remains as wide as ever.

As the Prime Minister noted in his remarks, the TFG Charter calls for a motion of no confidence against the government if the TFG is unable to complete the process of federalism with the prescribed two and one-half years from the establishment of the Independent Federal Constitution Commission in May 2006. Given that it is highly unlikely that the process of federalism will be started and completed by November 2008, at the very least the Prime Minister will almost certainly face another vote of no confidence by year's end. End Comment.
YAMAMOTO